



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|-------------------------------|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 09/940,406 | 08/27/2001 | Benjamin J. Bowers | 0325.00502 | 4349 |
| 21363 | 7590 | 10/24/2003 | EXAMINER | |
| CHRISTOPHER P. MAIORANA, P.C. | | | NGUYEN, HAI L | |
| 24025 GREATER MACK | | | ART UNIT | |
| SUITE 200 | | | PAPER NUMBER | |
| ST. CLAIR SHORES, MI 48080 | | | 2816 | |

DATE MAILED: 10/24/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/940,406

Applicant(s)

BOWERS ET AL.

Examiner

Hai L. Nguyen

Art Unit

2816

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 August 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 03 February 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Applicant's letter

1. The response received on 08/04/03 has been reviewed and considered with the following results:

The prior art rejections to the claims made in the previous Office Action mailed on 05/21/03 are now withdrawn in view of Applicant's amendments and arguments. Applicant's arguments have been considered but are moot in view of a new action on the merits appears below.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mueller et al. (US 6,313,663; previously cited).

With regard to claims 1 and 16, Mueller et al. discloses in Fig.7 an apparatus, and a method of use thereof, comprising an input section (702A exclude P2 & N2) configured to generate a first control signal and a second control signal in response to an input signal (408) and a select signal (EN_RD), wherein the input section comprises a first device (708) and a second device (710) each having a source and a drain configured to connect the input signal with the first control signal and the second control signal in response to the select signal; and an output

Art Unit: 2816

section (P2 & N2) configured to generate an output signal (406) in response to the first and the second control signals, wherein the output signal is related to the input signal when in a first mode (when EN_RD is High), and disabled when in a second mode (when EN_RD is Low).

Fig.7 of Mueller et al. meets all the claimed limitations except for one or more third devices (N2, P3 in instant Fig.5) each have a source and a drain configured to connect the first control signal (124) and the second control signal (126) when in the first mode. However, Mueller et al. teaches in Fig.6 a circuit having third devices (402) as recited in the claims. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention was made to utilize that third devices taught by Mueller et al. in Fig.7 for the advantage of passing voltage between its two control signals for controlling the output section.

With regard to claims 2-14 and 21, the reference also meets all the claimed limitations in these claims.

Claim 15 is similarly rejected. Note the above discussion with regard to claim 1.

With regard to claims 17-20, the reference also meets all the claimed limitations in these claims.


Conclusion

4. In view of a new action on the merits, this action is non-final.
5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Hai L. Nguyen whose telephone number is 703-306-9178 and Right Fax number is 703-746-3951. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday.

Art Unit: 2816

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Timothy Callahan can be reached on 703-308-4876. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-872-9318 for regular communications and 703-872-9319 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0956.

HLN 
October 15, 2003


TIMOTHY P. CALLAHAN
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2800